



sprouts

Changes Coming for the 2004 Recreation Pass Program

Beginning May 1, national forests in the Northwest will be making changes to the recreation pass program that affect the number and type of fee sites. These changes are prompted by national policy to create consistency where fees are charged across the Forest Service for recreation sites and for services to enhance the recreation experience for visitors.

Basically, fees will be charged only in areas where higher levels of recreation development or services are provided. Rustic camping will no longer be included under a day or annual pass. The changes represent a thirty percent reduction from last year in the number of recreation sites in Oregon and Washington where a day-use fee is charged. The new Northwest Forest Pass Site Guide for 2004, due out May 1, will list all of the fee sites.

In response to requests for one universal pass, seven state and federal agencies in Washington and Oregon are now collectively offering a convenient day-use recreation pass, which is honored at the majority of agency sites within the region.

Offered at an exceptional value, the Washington & Oregon Recreation Pass is a \$20 add-on to the existing Golden Eagle Passport (\$65). It may also be added to the National Parks Pass (\$50) with the Golden Eagle Hologram (\$15). The Washington & Oregon Recreation Pass may only be purchased at federal sites and from authorized vendors.

For more information, contact your local Forest Service office.

Forest-Wide Projects

40/60 – Project may create openings-larger than the 40 or 60 acre limitations stipulated by the National Forest Management Act, 36 CFR 219.27. Such creation requires 60 day public notification and approval of the Regional Forester.

CCF – 100 cubic feet

CE – Categorical Exclusion

EA – Environmental Assessment

EIS – Environmental Impact Statement

MBF – 1,000 board feet

MMBF – 1,000,000 board feet

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

VEG – This symbol indicates a project that may include treatment of unwanted vegetation. When a site-specific project to prevent or treat unwanted vegetation is being considered, the official responsible for that project is to notify the public.

Tamarack Rock Quarry Expansion EIS

Contact: Mike Redmond

Phone: (503) 668-1776

Email: mredmond@fs.fed.us

The Proposed Action includes expansion of the existing Tamarack rock quarry (formerly called Mud Creek) on approximately 60 acres of National Forest System land. The proposal may also include road improvements on the access road to the quarry. The rock excavated from the quarry would be used over time by the Forest Service and the Oregon Department of Transportation to help meet the long-term needs of maintenance, and reconstruction of roads in the Mt. Hood area.

The project area is located approximately 4 miles south of Government Camp, in Section 2, T.4S, R.8-1/2E, Willamette Meridian, Clackamas County, Oregon. The project area does not include any wilderness, roadless areas, wild and scenic rivers, late successional reserves, or riparian reserves.

Some of the preliminary issues that have been identified include visual quality as seen from key view points on the Forest, and traffic management conflict between commercial use and recreation.

The draft EIS is planned to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review by June 2004. The EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the Federal Register. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the NOA appears in the Federal Register.

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Barlow Ranger District Projects

Little Badger Underburn (approx. 800 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

This underburn is a new project although most of the field work required by NEPA has been completed. It is located south of the 27 road and north of the Badger Creek and Little Badger Creek confluence on the Barlow Ranger District. The purpose is to reintroduce fire back into the ecosystem, reduce the natural accumulation of litter and enhance the fire dependent native grasses, forbs and shrub species. This project may be implemented in the fall of 2004. A public comment period will be available when the Decision Memo for the Categorical Exclusion is ready.

The Dalles Watershed Road Maintenance

Contact: Chris Rossel

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: crossel@fs.fed.us

The Barlow Ranger District is proposing to construct fuel breaks and do fire fuels reduction along roads in the City of The Dalles Watershed. High priority roads would be identified during field review in the spring and summer of 2004, with possible treatment in the fall of 2004. Trees harvested during these operations would be used for fish logs or firewood.

Knebal Springs Trail Reconstruction

Contact: Dennis Beechler

Phone: (541) 328-6211

Email: dbeechler@fs.fed.us

The original project consisted of reconstruction of four miles of the Kenable Springs Trail, three miles of the Bottle Prairie Trail, and construction of two water crossings over the Middle Fork of Fivemile Creek. After further consideration and analysis, the scope of the project has been reduced. The project will now consist of approximately 100 yards of new trail construction on the Knebal Springs trail, construction of the bridges, construction of approximately 500 feet of new trail to connect the bridges to the existing trail, and the obliteration of approximately 200 feet of the existing trail down to the current stream crossings. Work on this project will begin again in the spring of 2004.

Juncrock Planning Area

Contact: Becky Nelson

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: bnelson01@fs.fed.us

The FEIS is completed and is available on the internet at www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood.

Swisher/West Gobbler Underburns (1,480 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 328-6211

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

The Decision Memo for the Categorical Exclusion has been signed. The purpose of these underburns is to introduce fire back into the ecosystem, reduce the natural accumulation of litter, and prevent the bark build-up around the base of large ponderosa pines. Underburning would reduce risk of a stand replacing fire, enhance deer and elk forage quantity and quality, and protect large ponderosa pine trees from the effects of future underburning. These underburns are consistent with the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan for the protection of the wildland/urban interface. Completion of the project is planned for spring or fall of 2004.

Sportsman's Park Fuel Modification (250 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

Planning and implementation of this project is continuing. Pre-commercial thinning along the south property line is expected to be completed this summer through a district-wide precommercial thinning program. The purpose is to increase fire suppression effectiveness and firefighter safety, and reduce the probability of damage from a wildfire to the community of Sportsman's Park by reducing the threat of crown fire and providing a defensible space for firefighters. Project boundaries will encompass up to 1,500 feet around the perimeter of Sportsman Park and may include both mechanical and prescribed fire treatments. This project is consistent with the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation plan for the protection of the wildland/urban interface. A public comment period for this project was available during the winter of 2003.

Barlow Ranger District Projects

Pen Creek Underburn (2,500 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

Formally known as East of 27 #2, this underburn is still in the planning stages. It is located between Tygh Creek and Jordan Creek on the Barlow Ranger District. The purpose is to re-introduce fire back into the ecosystem, reduce the natural accumulation of litter and enhance the tier dependent native grasses, forbs and shrub species. A public comment period for this project was available during the winter of 2003. Currently this project is unfunded.

Long Prairie Grazing Allotment EA

Contact: Dan Fissell

Phone: (541) 467-5117

Email: dfissell@fs.fed.us

An Environmental Assessment is scheduled for this grazing allotment during 2004. This analysis will determine the level and intensity of grazing management within this allotment. The plan will also identify restoration opportunities. The Decision Notice is anticipated in 2005.

Log Stringer Bridge Removal and Possible Replacement

Contact: Ken Huskey

Phone: (541) 467-2177

Email: khuskey@fs.fed.us

The three bridges are located on the east side of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Holes in the decking surface, subgrade failures at the approaches, and advanced rot in structural members have resulted in vehicle closures of these bridges for safety concerns.

The East Fork Salmon River Bridge, Forest Development Road (FDR) 3500220, and Klinger Bridge, FDR 4300221, are located on the Hood River District. The Cedar Creek Bridge, FDR 2730160 is located on the Barlow District.

Analysis is ongoing to determine if there is a need to replace the bridges and when. Also to be determined is at what Traffic Service Level and Maintenance Level the roads beyond the bridges would need to be to meet resource objectives on lands accessed by these roads. One possible alternative would be to include decommissioning and changing the roads to trails.

Wildlife Guzzlers on the Ramsey Creek Parcel

Contact: Rich Thurman

Phone: (541) 467-2201

Email: rthurman@fs.fed.us

This proposed project would install two wildlife guzzlers on the Ramsey Creek parcel in T 2S, R 12E, Sec. 16 & 17. Water is in short supply on this ridge and guzzlers would benefit all wildlife, especially deer and wild turkeys. NEPA is planned for the fall of 2004. The proposed installations of the guzzlers would occur in the summer of 2005.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment on these projects, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27 (d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality.

Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within a specified timeframe.

Clackamas River Ranger District Projects

Cloak Thinning EA

Clackamas County, Oregon

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

The Cloak project consists of commercial thinning of timber stands in the Upper Clackamas and Oak Grove watersheds. These were previously described as separate projects but have been combined. This project would thin 1,550 acres. The purpose of this initiative is to thin young forest stands to achieve multiple objectives:

- Increase health and vigor and enhance growth that results in larger wind firm trees;
- Enhance forage for deer and elk;
- Provide forest products consistent with the Northwest Forest Plan goal of maintaining the stability of local and regional economies now and in the future;
- Enhance riparian reserves by accelerating the development of mature and late-successional stand conditions.

This action is needed, because second-growth stands are experiencing a slowing of growth due to overcrowding. At the landscape level, young stands that once provided high quality forage are rapidly becoming crowded, contributing to a trend of declining forage for deer and elk. The proposed action is to thin and harvest wood fiber from approximately 1,332 acres of matrix land and approximately 217 acres of riparian reserves. On areas proposed for thinning in the matrix, the prescription would be adjusted on approximately 545 acres to increase forage for deer and elk. On areas proposed for thinning in the matrix, approximately 1,080 acres would be fertilized. New temporary roads (1.5 miles) are needed to access the landings. These roads would be obliterated and revegetated after completion of the project. A Preliminary Assessment would be completed in May of 2004.

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Hood River Ranger District Projects

Bear Knoll Planning Area EA

T.4S., R.9E., Sec. 24,25,26,27,28,29,33, ,34, 35,36 and T.5S., R.9. 2, 3,4,10

Contact: Becky Nelson

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: bnelson01@fs.fed.us

This planning effort was begun in 1998. It has been on hold for the last year, while other work was being completed. Rather than an EIS, two EA's are proposed for the Bear Knoll Planning Area. One EA proposes to thin overstocked immature stands through commercial timber sales. The other EA proposes to treat over-mature stands with a regeneration harvest. Safety concerns along Highway 26 have prompted the proposal to remove trees that could reach the road if they fell. Temporary road construction and road closure are also proposed. The two EA's would be analyzed together and would be completed during the spring of 2004.

Mill Creek Planning Area

Contact: Rich Thurman

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: rthurman@fs.fed.us

The Hood River Ranger District is proposing to treat approximately 7,200 acres located approximately 5 miles southeast of the community of Mt. Hood. Specialists concerns identified are:

- Forest condition due to the lack of fire over the last 100 years.
- The invasion of non-native plant species.
- The high level of reading and the resulting wildlife harassment and poaching
- Aquatic habitat degradation due to roads and grazing operations.

A decision is expected in the fall of 2005.

3545/3545620 Reconstruction

Contact: Stewart Fletcher

Phone: (541) 352-6002, ext. 616

Email: sjfletcher@fs.fed.us

The Hood River Ranger District has decided to reconstruct road 3545 and 3545620. These roads provide access to Hood River Meadows Nordic Ski Center and Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Area overflow parking. These roads are deteriorating and have required substantial patching in the last two years to protect plowing equipment and allow safe travel. The reconstruction will include drainage systems, pulverizing the existing asphalt surface, adding gravel and paving. Work is anticipated to take place summer 2004.

Road 18 Easement

Contact: Stewart Fletcher

Phone: (541) 352-6002, ext. 616

Email: sjfletcher@fs.fed.us

The Hood River Ranger District proposes to grant requested access easement on Road 18 to Longview Fibre for the management of Longview Fibre Lands and acquire from Longview Fibre a new Corporation Existing Road Easement for FR 18 across Longview Fibre lands. These easements are planned for completion by fall 2004.

Special Use Permits to Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Contact: Doug Jones

Phone: (541) 352-6002, ext. 682

Email: dgjones@fs.fed.us

Since as early as 1937, the NRCS (formerly Soil Conservation Service) has operated snow surveys and electronic snow and precipitation monitoring sites on the forest. Currently, there are 10 Snotel sites that consist of a rain gauge, snow "pillow", equipment shed and antennae in various locations on the Clackamas River, Hood River and Zigzag Ranger Districts. NRCS also takes snow surveys at other locations including two on the Barlow Ranger District. We propose issuing a 20-year Special Use Permit to NRCS to authorize continued use of the sites. Each Snotel site is approximately 4,000 sq. ft. Several have a perimeter fence to protect the equipment from cattle grazing.

Zigzag Ranger District Projects

Timothy Lake Area, Hazard Tree Reduction

Contact: Duane Bishop

Phone: (503) 622-3191

Email: dbishop@fs.fed.us

The proposed project is to fall 100-200 dead and dying hazardous trees along three segments of road surrounding Timothy Lake area, affecting approximately 20 acres. The goal is to complete a Categorical Exclusion for the Proposed Action in May 2004, with a Decision Memo being issued in summer 2004.

Hazard trees that are felled under this proposed action that are in excess of current standards for coarse down woody material will be available to be moved off-site for storage and used in upcoming stream restoration projects. Coarse woody material had been removed from stream channels during the 1950's to 1980's with the goal of improving passage for anadromous fish and flood control. Recent studies, 1980's to date, showed streams and riparian areas need woody material for structural complexity, to dissipate flood energy while providing cover and deep holding pools for fish. All of the material removed and stored from this project will be used in the next two or three years on stream restoration projects on public and private lands.

French's Dome Rock Climbing Site

T2S, R8E, Sections 8 and 9

Contact: Mary Ellen Fitzgerald

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext. 625

Email: mfitzgerald@fs.fed.us

French's Dome is a rock-climbing site off Lolo Pass Road. Erosion at the base of this area has become significant. The proposed project would build retaining walls that will double as belay platforms, and construct short segments of trail and steps on the northeast side of the rock. Local rock climbers of the area have provided design ideas. The site is not in federally designated wilderness.

Timberline Ski Area, New Chair lift and Ski Trail System Construction EIS

Contact: Paul Koehler

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext 614

email: pkoehler@fs.fed.us

Work on the Environmental Impact Statement continues. The proposed action consists of constructing a new detachable quad (four passenger) chairlift and six new trails in the southwest corner of the ski area's special use permit boundary. The proposal also includes an addition of approximately 10 acres to the existing 1,400-acre permit boundary. A draft EIS is anticipated to be completed and available for public review by May 2004.

Mt Hood Ski Bowl Resort

Contact: Paul Koehler

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext 614

email: pkoehler@fs.fed.us

A new term permit would be issued to H. Ski Corporation for the operation and maintenance of Mt. Hood Ski Bowl Resort. No changes in the current authorized uses, facilities or the permit area are proposed. The term of the permit would be for a maximum of forty years.

Government Camp Trails Planning EA

T.3S., R.8E., Sec. 13,14,23,24,25, and T.4S., R.8 1/2 E., Sec. 12,13,14,23,24,25,26,35,36, and T.4S., R.9E., Sec. 7,18,19,20,29,30

Contact: Kathleen Walker

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext. 641

Email: kwalker@fs.fed.us

The community of Government Camp, working with Clackamas County Economic Development Agency, developed a Trails Master Plan in 2000 to construct and reconstruct winter and summer trails, trailheads, and trailhead parking around the community. Nearly all the trails are located on National Forest lands. The Forest plans to complete an Environmental Assessment for projects proposed in the Master Plan. The Forest may also consider some trails in the surrounding area. The objectives of the plan are to establish a trail system in and around the Government Camp that allows visitors to get to and from town and the adjacent destinations. The EA is intended to be completed by fall 2004.

Mt. Hood National Forest Offices

Mt. Hood National Forest Headquarters Office

16400 Champion Way

Sandy, OR 97055

Phone: **503-668-1700**

Hours: 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Barlow Ranger District

780 NE Court Street

Dufur, OR 97021

Phone: **541-467-2291**

Hours: 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Clackamas River Ranger District

595 NW Industrial Way

Estacada, OR 97023

Business: **503-630-6861**

Visitor Information: **503-630-8700**

Hours: 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM, M-Sat

Closed weekends during winter months.

Zigzag Ranger District

70220 E. Highway 26

Zigzag, OR 97049

Phone: **503-622-3191 or**

503-668-1704

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Hood River Ranger District

6780 Highway 35

Mt. Hood - Parkdale, OR 97041

Phone: **541-352-6002**

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Summer Hours: May 30 - Sept. 6

8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, 7 days a week



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Email address: syork@fs.fed.us

Website: www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood

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